

MOSLEM SCOURGE OF EAST FOR CENTURIES

Ottomans Prove They Are Civilization-Proof.

ANNALS DRIP WITH BLOOD

American, Who Knows Past and Present, Tells Story of Nightmare Nation Now Passing.

REVEALS TURKS' TERRIBLE.

In this contribution to current history, dealing with Levantine affairs and Turkey's part in the great war, for the first time fully revealed the continuing turpitude of the Turkish nation for five centuries.

With a clear understanding of Turkish character and a full knowledge of Turkey's past and present, one of the ablest of America's diplomats, for years stationed at Constantinople, tells of the long and murderous campaign of the Turk to make himself supreme in the Ottoman Empire.

BY HENRY MORGENTHAU, (Formerly American Ambassador to Turkey.)

The withdrawal of the allied fleet at the Dardanelles had consequences which the world does not yet completely understand. The practical effect of the event was to isolate the Turkish empire from all the world excepting Germany and Austria. England, France, Russia, and Italy, which for a century had had a restraining hand over the Ottoman empire, had finally lost all power to influence or control. The Turks perceived that a series of dazzling events had changed them from cringing dependents of the European powers into free agents. For the first time in two centuries they could now live their national life according to their own inclinations, and govern their peoples according to their own will.

The first expression of this rejuvenated national life was an episode, so far as I know, is the most terrible in the history of the world. New Turkey, freed from European tutelage, celebrated its national rebirth by murdering not far from a million of its own subjects.

Young Turks Have Visions. I can hardly exaggerate the effect which the repulse of the allied fleet produced upon the Turks. They believed they had won the really great decisive battle of the war. For several centuries they had been defeated and had now met its first serious reverse at the hands of the Turks.

In the first moments of their pride, the Young Turk leaders saw visions of the complete resurrection of their empire. What was once a decaying and a decaying nation, had suddenly started on a new and glorious life. In their pride and arrogance the Turks began to look with disdain upon the people who had taught them what they knew of modern warfare and nothing angered them so much as any suggestion that they owed their success to their German allies.

British Fleet "Defeated."

"Why should we feel any obligation to the Germans?" they would say to me. "What have they done for us which compares with what we have done for them? They have lent us some money and sent us some officers, it is true, but see what we have done! We have defeated the British fleet—something which the Germans and no other nation could do. We have stationed armies on the Caucasian front, and we have kept busy large bodies of Russian troops that would have been used on the western front. Similarly we have compelled England to keep large armies in Egypt, in Mesopotamia, and in that way we have weakened the allied armies in France. No, the Germans could never have achieved their military successes without us; the show of obligation is entirely on their side. This conviction possessed all the leaders of Union and Progress party and now began to have a determining effect upon Turkish national life and Turkish policy. Essentially the Turk is a bully and a coward; he is brave as a lion when things are going his way, but cringing, abject, and nerveless when reverses come. And now that the fortunes of war were apparently favoring the empire, I began to see an entirely new Turk unfolding before my eyes. The hesitating and fearful Ottoman, feeling his way cautiously amid the mazes of European diplomacy, and seeking opportunities to find an advantage for himself in the divided councils of the European powers, gave place to an upstanding, almost dazzling figure, proud and assertive, determined to live his own life, and absolutely contemptuous of his Christian foes.

Turk Reverts to Type.

I was really witnessing a remarkable development in race psychology—an almost classical instance of reversion to type. The ragged, unkempt Turk of the twentieth century was vanishing and in his place was appearing the Turk of the fourteenth and the fifteenth, the Turk who had swept out of his Asiatic fastnesses, conquered the powerful peoples in his way and founded in Asia, Africa and Europe one of the most extensive empires that history has known.

If we are properly to appreciate this new Talaat and Enver, and the events which now took place, we must understand the Turk who, under Osman and his successors, exercised his mighty but devastating influence in the world. We must realize that the basic fact underlying the Turkish mentality is its utter contempt for all other races. A fairly insane pride is the element which largely explains this strange human species. The common term applied by the Turk to the Christian is "dog," and his estimate of the inferiority of the European neighbors is far less worthy of consideration than his own domestic animals.

All Turk's Graces Borrowed. Such graces of civilization as the Turk has acquired in five centuries have practically all been taken from the subject people whom he so greatly despises. The Turks have learned little of European art or science, they have established very few educational institutions and illiteracy is the prevailing rule. The result is that poverty has attained a degree of sordidness and the Ottoman Empire which is almost unparalleled elsewhere. The Turkish peasant lives in a mud hut, he sleeps on a dirt floor; he has no chairs, no tables, no eating utensils, and no clothes except the few scant garments which cover his back and which he usually wears for many years.

In the course of time these Turks might learn certain things from their European and Arabic neighbors, but there was one idea which they could never even faintly grasp. They could not understand that a conquered people were anything except slaves. When

they took possession of a land, they found it occupied by a certain number of camels, horses, buffaloes, dogs, swine, and human beings. Of all these living things the object that physically most resembled themselves they regarded as the least important. It became a common saying with them that a horse or a camel was far more valuable than a man; these animals cost money, whereas "infidel" Christians were plentiful in the Ottoman country and could easily be forced to labor.

Christian Held Unpleasant.

It is true that the early Sultans gave the subject peoples and the Europeans in the Empire certain rights, but these in themselves really reflected the contempt in which all non-Moslem were held. The Sultans erected the several peoples, such as the Greeks and the Armenians, into separate "millets," or nations, not because they desired to promote their independence and welfare, but because they regarded them as vermin, and, therefore, disqualified for membership in the Ottoman state. The attitude of the government toward Christian subjects was illustrated by certain regulations which limited their freedom of action. The buildings in which Christians lived should not be conspicuous and their churches should have no bell-towers. Christians could not ride a horse in the city, for that was the exclusive right of the noble Moslem. The Turk had the right to beat the sharpness of his sword upon the neck of any Christian. Imagine a great government, year in and year out, maintaining this attitude toward many millions of its own subjects! And for centuries the Turks simply lived like parasites upon these over-burdened and industrious people. They taxed them to economic extinction, stole their most beautiful daughters and forced them into their harems, took Christian male infants by the hundreds of thousands and brought them up as Moslem soldiers.

Time Brings Some Change.

Such were the mental characteristics of the Turk in his days of military greatness. In recent times his attitude toward foreigners and his subject peoples had superficially changed. His own military decline, and the ease with which the infidel nations defeated his finest armies, had apparently given the haughty descendants of Osman at least a modicum of progress. Many Turks also now received their education in European universities; they studied in their professional schools, and they became physicians, surgeons, lawyers, engineers, and chemists of the modern kind. However much the more progressive Moslems might despise their Christian associates, they could not ignore the fact that the finest things in this temporal world were the products of European and American civilization.

And now that one development of modern history which seemed to be least understandable to the Turk began to force itself upon the consciousness of the more intelligent and progressive. Certain leaders arose who began to speak surreptitiously of such things as "Constitutionalism," "Liberty," and "Self-Government." These daring spirits began to dream of overturning the autocratic Sultan and of substituting a parliamentary system for his irresponsible rule. The point which I am emphasizing here is that this movement presupposed a complete transformation of Turkish mentality, especially in its attitude toward subjects. No longer, under the reformed Turkish state, were Greeks, Syrians, Armenians, and Jews to be regarded as "filthy Gaiours."

Turkey for the Turks.

But all these aspirations vanished like a dream. Long before the European War began, the Sultan, who had disappeared, the power of the new Sultan had gone, and the hopes of regenerating Turkey on modern lines had gone also, leaving only a group of individuals, headed by Talaat and Enver, actually in possession of the state. Having lost their democratic aspirations, these leaders now espoused a new national conception. In place of a democratic, constitutional state they resurrected the idea of Pan-Turkism; in place of equal treatment of all Ottomans, they decided to establish a country exclusively for Turks.

Extermination Now Proposed.

These leaders not only resurrected the barbaric conceptions of their ancestors, but they went to extremes that had never entered the minds of the early Sultans. Their eighteenth and nineteenth century predecessors treated the subject peoples as dirt under their feet, yet they believed that they had a certain usefulness and did not disdain to make them their serfs. But this committee of union and progress, led by Talaat and Enver, now decided to do away with them altogether. They had conquering Turks had made the Christians their servants, but their parvenu descendants bettered their instruction, for they determined to exterminate them wholesale and Turkify the empire by massacring the non-Moslem elements.

Originality—This was not the statesmanlike conception of Talaat and Enver; the man who first devised it was one of the greatest monsters known to history, the "Red Sultan," Abdul Hamid. This man came to the throne in 1878, at a critical period in Turkish history. In the first few years of his reign he lost Bulgaria, as well as important provinces in the Caucasus, his last remaining vestiges of sovereignty in Montenegro, Serbia, and Rumania, and all his real powers in Russia and Herzegovina. Greece had long since become an independent nation, and the processes that were to wrench Egypt from the Ottoman Empire had already begun.

As the Sultan took stock of his inheritance, he could easily foresee the day when all the rest of his domain would pass into the hand of the infidel. What had caused this disintegration of this extensive Turkish empire? The real cause, of course, lay deep in the character of the Turk, but Abdul Hamid saw only the more obvious fact that the intervention of the great European powers had brought relief to these oppressed nations. And what had happened several times before might happen again.

There still remained one compact race in the eastern empire that had national aspirations and national potentialities. In the northern part of Asia Minor, the Armenians, there were six provinces in which the Armenians formed the largest element in the population. From the time of Herodotus the port of Asia has borne the name of Armenia. The Armenians of the present day are the direct descendants of the people who inhabited that country 2000 years ago. Their origin is so ancient that it is lost in fable and mystery.

It is definitely known about the Armenians, however, is that for ages they have constituted the most civilized and most industrious race in the eastern section of the Ottoman empire. Everywhere they are known for their industry, their intelligence and their decent and orderly lives. They are so superior to the Turks intellectually and morally that much of the business and industry had passed into their hands.



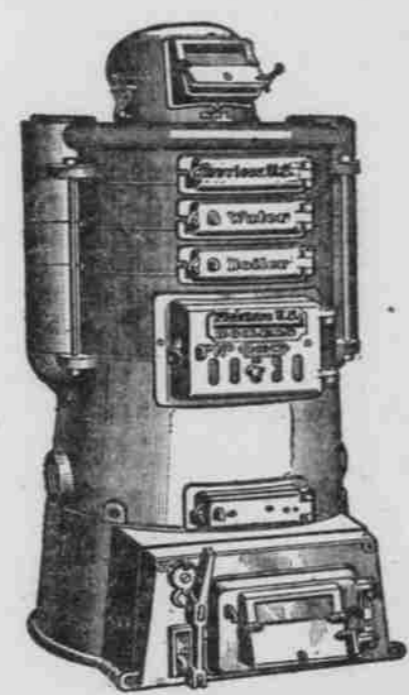
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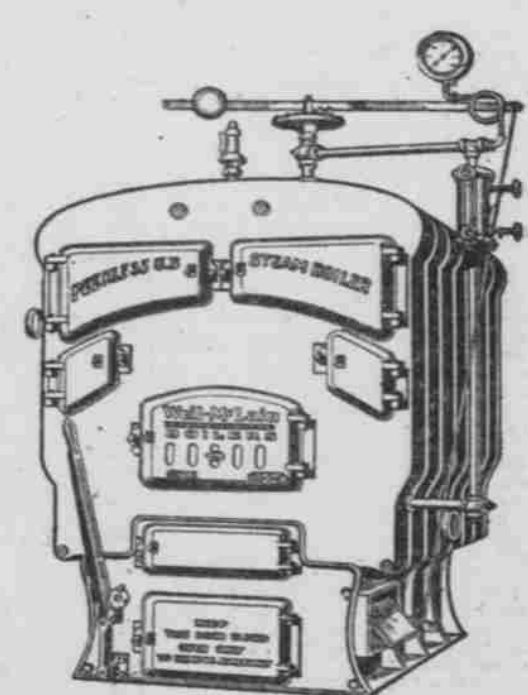
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These people became Christians in the fourth century and established the Armenian church as their state religion. This is said to be the oldest Christian church in existence.

Armenians Are Christians.

In the face of persecutions which have had no parallel elsewhere, these people have clung to their early Christian faith with the utmost tenacity. For 1500 years they have lived there in Armenia, a little island of Christians surrounded by backward peoples of hostile religion and hostile race. Their long existence has been one of unending martyrdom. The territory which they inhabit forms the connecting link between Europe and Asia, and all the Asiatic invasions—Saracens, Tartars, Mongols, Kurds and Turks—have passed over their peaceful country. For centuries they have thus been the Belgium of the east. Through all this period the Armenians have regarded themselves not as Asiatics, but as Europeans. They speak an Indo-European language, their racial origin is believed by scholars to be Aryan, and the fact that their religion is the religion of Europe has always made them turn their eyes westward. And out of that western country, they have always hoped, would some day come the deliverance that would rescue them from their murderous masters.

And now as Abdul Hamid, in 1878, severed his shattered domain, he saw that its most dangerous spot was Armenia. He believed, rightly or wrongly, that these Armenians, like the Ru-

manians, the Bulgarians, the Greeks, and the Serbians, aspired to restore their independent, mediaeval nation, and he knew that Europe and America sympathized with this ambition.

Wholesale Murder Ordered.

How could the Sultan free himself permanently from this danger? An enlightened administration, which would have transformed the Armenians into free men and made them safe in their lives and property and civil and religious rights would probably have made the Sultan could not rise to such a conception of statesmanship as this. Instead, Abdul Hamid apparently thought that there was only one way of ridding Turkey of the Armenian problem—add that was to rid her of the Armenians. The physical destruction of 2,000,000 men, women, and children by massacres, organized and directed by the state, seemed to be the one sure way of forestalling the further disruption of the Turkish Empire.

And now for nearly 20 years Turkey gave the world an illustration of government by massacre. We in Europe and America heard of these events when they reached especially monstrous proportions, as they did in 1894-95, when nearly 300,000 Armenians were most atrociously done to death. But through all these years the existence of the Armenians was one continuous nightmare. Their property was stolen, their men were murdered, their women were ravished, their young girls were

kidnapped and forced to live in Turkish harems.

Yet Abdul Hamid was not able to accomplish his full purpose. He attempted to exterminate the Armenians in 1895 and 1896, but found certain insuperable obstructions to his scheme. Chief of these were England, France and Russia. It became apparent that unless the Sultan desisted, England, France, and Russia would intervene, and the Sultan well knew, that in case this intervention took place, such remnants of Turkey as had survived earlier partitions would disappear.

Satanic Enterprise Fails.

Thus Abdul Hamid had to abandon his satanic enterprise of destroying a whole race by murder, yet Armenia continued to suffer the slow agony of pitiless persecution. The Young Turk regime, despite its promises of universal brotherhood, brought no respite to the Armenians. A few months after the love feasting already described, one of the worst massacres took place at Adana, in which 35,000 people were destroyed.

And now the Young Turks, who had adopted so many of Abdul Hamid's ideas, also made his Armenian policy their own. Their passion for Turkifying the nation seemed to demand logically the extermination of all Christians—Greeks, Syrians, and Armenians.

Much as they admired the Mohammedan conquerors of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, they stupidly believed that these great warriors had made one fatal mistake, for they had had it

Great Day Finally Comes.

Unlike Abdul Hamid, the Young Turks found themselves in a position where they could carry out this "holy" enterprise. Great Britain, France and Russia had stood in the way of their predecessors. But now these obstacles had been removed. The Young Turks, as I have said, believed that they had defeated them and that they could, therefore, no longer interfere with their internal affairs. Only one power could successfully raise objections and that was Germany.

In 1895, while all the rest of Europe was ringing with Gladstone's denunciations and demanding intervention, Kaiser Wilhelm the Second had gone to Constantinople, visited Abdul

Hamid, pinned his finest decorations on that bloody tyrant's breast and kissed him on both cheeks. The same Kaiser who had done this in 1895 was still sitting on the throne in 1915, and was now Turkey's ally. Thus, for the first time in two centuries, the Turks, in 1915, had their Christian populations utterly at their mercy. The time had finally come to make Turkey exclusively the country of the Turk.

(Continued tomorrow.)

Sir Thomas White, Canadian Minister of Finance, arranged with the British authorities to purchase the 1918 salmon pack in British Columbia.

